

# News from Austria

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## Austria commemorates the 62<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the Second Republic

On 27 April 2007 Austria celebrated the 62<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the Second Republic. On 27 April 1945 Karl Renner's provisional government had signed the Austrian Declaration of Independence. After the wreath-laying ceremony in the consecration room and the crypt of Burgtor, the entrance to Hofburg, the government held a special Council of Ministers. In his statement Gusenbauer did not only thank the generation of the post-war reconstruction era but also reminded of the victims of the NS regime and Austria's co-responsibility for the crimes of National Socialism. A lasting political and social consensus had been the foundation for Austria's success story. The Chancellor referred to the EU as a peace project "which we will support and promote to the best of our ability". ■

## Taking stock after 100 days of SPÖ-ÖVP coalition government

According to Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer, the governing coalition between the Social Democrats (SPÖ) and the People's Party (ÖVP) was making good progress. Taking stock after the first 100 days in office, he praised the successful government work. Crucial issues were prioritised, the implementation of projects had started by taking concrete measures. Examples mentioned by Gusenbauer were social fairness and a just pension system, the combat against poverty, long-term care, childcare, the fight against unemployment, education and climate protection. The new government was taking the problems of the people seriously and approached solutions ambitiously and directly, explained the Federal Chancellor on 20 April 2007.

Considerable improvement could be seen already now regarding pensions, anti-poverty measures (guaranteed minimum income), education (reducing the maximum number of pupils in classes to 25) and climate protection (Climate Fund). Unemployment was declining for the first time in many years, stated Gusenbauer.

Vice-Chancellor and Minister of Finance Wilhelm Molterer was pleased about the fact that with the biennial budget 2007/2008 and the infrastructure package a foundation for more growth and jobs had been laid. ■

## Less strict pension regulations

On 25 April 2007 the Council of Ministers approved the government's proposed revision of the latest pension reform. The regulations for "heavy workers" are extended until 2010, reducing the deduction for early retirement by half (to 2.1%). The Social Package (67<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the General Social Insurance Act) also includes measures to combat illegal work. New employees have to be registered with the social insurance institution before they start working.

Based on the regulation for "heavy workers" expiring in 2010, women may retire at the age of 55 and men at the age of 60 without deductions from their pensions if they paid pension contributions for 40/45 years. According to the rules on early retirement for all other workers ("corridor pension"), retirement is possible after 37.5 contribution years as from the age of 62 years. The pension loss under the Amendment is 2.1% (instead of 4.2%) per year. ■

## New long-term care model

On 25 April 2007, the Council of Ministers adopted the so-called "Domiciliary Long-Term Care Act". The new Act covering the labour legislation aspects of domiciliary long-term care provided during 24 hours a day will enter into force on 1 July 2007. It legalises the situation of previously illegal professional care providers. ■

## May Day: SPÖ and ÖVP turn spotlight on government work

The motto of this year's May Day demonstration of the Social Democrats (SPÖ) at Rathausplatz in Vienna is: "A new policy for Austria. Giving priority to the people". The People's Party (ÖVP) presents its "Plan for the Future: Good Work" in a visit to a printing company. ■

## Commemorating Mauthausen

At this year's ceremony at the former Mauthausen concentration camp on 6 May 2007 tribute will be paid to scholars and artists imprisoned by the Nazis. Besides survivors, witnesses of the time and guests from all over the world, Chancellor Gusenbauer and Interior Minister Platter will be among the attendees. ■

Federal Chancellor Gusenbauer: "A fruitful development from which all Austrians can benefit requires dialogue and respect for the views of the political opponent."

Chancellor Gusenbauer: "We want to take advantage of the favourable economic trend to ensure sustainable growth and to strengthen and improve the opportunities of the people in the future."

Vice-Chancellor Molterer: "These first 100 days have been successful – 100 good days for the people. We are making good progress."

## President Fischer at state funeral of Boris Yeltsin in Moscow

With a church service and a state ceremony Russia bade farewell to its first elected President Boris Yeltsin on 25 April 2007. Russian President Vladimir Putin and Yeltsin's predecessor Mikhail Gorbachev as well as numerous mourners from all over the world attended the funeral service at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow. Among those present were two former US presidents, Bill Clinton and George Bush Snr., German Federal President Horst Köhler and Austrian Federal President Heinz Fischer. The European Union was represented by Commissioner for External Affairs Benita Ferrero-Waldner.

Putin praised Yeltsin as the driving force behind change. Yeltsin had always believed in the rebirth and restructuring of Russia.

In a letter of condolence to Yeltsin's widow Naina Austrian President Fischer described him as a "great statesman who will always be honoured and commemorated with deep respect in Austria". The historic achievement of Boris Yeltsin was his "courageous opposition to the coup d'état in August 1991 in Moscow and the foundation of the Russian Federation as a democratic state initiated by him, making Russia a highly respected member of the international community of states", said Fischer.

Yeltsin died from a heart failure on 23 April 2007, aged 76. He was laid to rest in the cemetery of Novodevichy Convent.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Boris Yeltsin was the first Russian President launching radical free-market reforms, which, however, cast a major part of the population into poverty. During his second term of office, Yeltsin abruptly resigned in 1999, ensuring that then Prime Minister Putin would become his successor. ■

## Prime Ministers of Czech Republic and Lithuania in Vienna

The Prime Ministers of the Czech Republic and Lithuania, Mirek Topolánek and Gediminas Kirkilas, participated in the "European-Russian Economic Forum", which was organised by the "European Forum Alpbach" in Vienna on 23 April 2007. On the sidelines of this

conference, bilateral talks were held with Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer.

Gusenbauer, Topolánek and Kirkilas agreed that a new EU-Russia Partnership Agreement was indispensable to establish a basis for a stable cooperation between the European Union and Russia. At the same time the EU Foreign Ministers stressed in Luxembourg that the meat conflict between Russia and Poland had to be settled quickly as it blocked the negotiations on the Partnership Agreement with Moscow.

The three heads of government emphasised that the relations with Russia had to be founded on reciprocity. "A liberalised European energy market on the one hand and a monopoly on the other hand – this will not work", said Gusenbauer. The Chancellor stated that the opportunities for cooperation between the EU and Russia included trade, climate protection and the promotion of nuclear energy safety. Europe could only benefit from a strong Russia, however there should be a common understanding of the "rules of the game", said Gusenbauer.

The Chancellor described the bilateral relations between Austria and Lithuania as "very friendly and uncomplicated". The two countries had not only common concerns in the EU, e.g. the EU Constitution, but could intensify cooperation in the economic sector and above all in cultural affairs. Prime Minister Kirkilas invited Chancellor Gusenbauer to Lithuania.

Linz and Vilnius will be European Capitals of Culture in 2009. ■

## Federal President Fischer pays state visit to Norway

Austrian Federal President Heinz Fischer paid a state visit to Norway from 17 to 19 April 2007. After having been received by King Harald and Queen Sonja in Oslo, he held talks with Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg and others.

In a lecture at the renowned Norwegian Nobel Institute Fischer hailed the United Nations and the European Union as the most successful peace projects of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Austrian President inaugurated the Egon Schiele exhibition in the Munch Museum in Oslo – the first presentation of this artist in Scandinavia (see Culture). ■

Federal President Fischer: "Boris Yeltsin shaped the new Russia in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century."

Federal Chancellor Gusenbauer: "Austria and Lithuania are a good example of a successful partnership in Europe."

Federal President Fischer: "It is a pleasure to see how cordial the relations between Austria and Norway are."

## OeNB: current account 2006 with new record result

“We can be proud of the achievements of the Austrian economy”, stated the Governor of the Austrian National Bank (OeNB) on 24 April 2007 about the new record result of the domestic current account for the year 2006. Based on preliminary data, in 2006 Austria’s external sector recorded the highest surplus in its history: 8.2 billion euros or 3.2% of the gross domestic product (GDP).

In 2006 Austria exported goods and services totalling 143 billion euros. The export-income ratio has climbed to 56% of the GDP. With 106.9 billion euros, goods exports for the first time crossed the 100-billion-euro threshold but, as in the years before, the current account surplus in 2006 was mainly due to services exports. In the service sector exports exceeded imports by a total of 10.3 billion euros (2005: 9.3 billion euros). Tourism contributed no less than 5.9 billion euros. The services exported amounted to 36 billion euros (+9.2%), while the services imported totalled 25.7 billion euros (+8.3%).

Austria owed the current account surplus mainly to the significant improvement of its competitive position in the currency union, stressed OeNB Director Peter Zöllner. The result had also benefited from the strong growth of the global economy. The trade partners in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe were playing an increasingly important role. Currently, the highest growth rates were recorded in Eastern Europe and in the Balkans, informed Zöllner.

In parallel Austria developed into a capital exporter during the year 2006. Austria’s net capital investments abroad stood at 6.9 billion euros (after 805 million euros in 2005). Net direct investments totalled 3.3 million euros.

The Austrian external sector continues to develop dynamically. Based on preliminary data of the Austrian Statistical Office (Statistik Austria) of 27 April 2007, the total value of goods exports in the period January to February 2007 was 17.31 billion euros, exceeding the prior-year level by 10.5%. The import volume rose by 6.1% to 17.07 billion euros. The balance on merchandise trade registered a surplus of 0.24 billion euros, that with the EU a surplus of 0.03 billion euros. ■

## Budget: strong increase in tax revenue also in 2007

In January and February 2007 the tax revenue exceeded the level registered in the same period of last year by no less than 540 million euros. The Austrian citizens paid taxes amounting to 9.891 billion euros in the first two months of the current year.

The wage tax and corporate income tax revenue surged by 371.7 and 375.1 million euros, respectively. The wage tax contributed more than 3 billion euros in the first two months to the tax receipts, while the corporate income tax accounted for almost 1 billion euros. ■

## OMV plans gas project with Iran

On 22 April 2007 Austria’s listed oil and gas group OMV signed a memorandum of understanding with the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) to develop parts of the South Pars gas field in the Persian Gulf and to set up a plant for liquid natural gas. OMV did not give any figures regarding the financial scope of the project. Management does not consider the deal problematic. OMV would of course satisfy all UN and EU requirements regarding Iran, stressed the group’s spokesman. The negotiations on the conditions of the Austrian participation in developing the world’s largest gas field are to be concluded in autumn 2007.

This is not the first project of OMV in Iran. Since 2001 the enterprise has been developing an oil field in western Iran. Besides OMV numerous other oil and gas companies are active in Iran, among them the French Total, the Italian Eni, the Dutch-British Shell and Russia’s Gazprom. The OMV project in Iran receives the full support of leading Austrian government officials. Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer explained on 25 April 2007 that there was “no alternative” to the policy of OMV if dependency on one single supplier was to be avoided. ■

## A Russian partner for Strabag

Russian industrial magnet Oleg Deripaska became a partner of Strabag. He acquired a 30% stake in Europe’s sixth largest building group for a total of 1.2 billion euros. ■

OeNB Governor Liebscher: “Today Austria presents itself as an excellent international economic location and financial market. As a financial services provider in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe Austria is a pioneer.”

OeNB Director Zöllner: “With the record current account 2006, the trend of the past four years has been reinforced.”

Minister for Economic Affairs Bartenstein: “Goods and services exports safeguard more than every second Austrian job.”

OMV CEO Ruttenstorfer: “The planned cooperation with Iran is an important step to avoid complete dependency on Russian gas supplies.”

## Mourning for Marie Zimmermann

Drama director of the Vienna Festival (“Wiener Festwochen”) Marie Zimmermann, who had suffered from manic depression, decided to end her life in a psychiatric clinic in Hamburg on 18 April 2007.

Marie Zimmermann was born near Aachen in 1955. She studied German literature and language, philosophy and sociology in her native town. Then she worked as a free-lance journalist and lecturer for literature studies and German as a foreign language. In 1985 she became a press officer, cooperating with her husband Friedrich Schirmer. During his artistic management she was responsible for public information and public relations at Landesbühne Esslingen in Württemberg until 1989. She was the managing drama director of Städtische Bühnen Freiburg from 1989 to 1993. From 1993 to 1999 she occupied the position of a managing theatre dramaturgist at Staatstheater Stuttgart. From 1997 to 2000 she was active as an artistic director of the international festival “Theaterformen” in Braunschweig and Hannover, which also cooperated with Expo 2000 and developed several co-productions with Wiener Festwochen. Having been a member of the jury of the first directors’ competition of the Vienna Festival already in 1998, the theatre specialist became the festival’s drama director under its artistic manager Luc Bondy. She described Wiener Festwochen as a festival wholeheartedly supported by the audience. She was one of the first theatre-makers to recognise Vienna’s potential as a gate to Eastern Europe and to focus on the former Eastern bloc countries. Zimmermann’s contract with Wiener Festwochen would have expired at the end of June 2007. On 1 November 2007 she would have become festival director herself – at the Ruhr Triennial Festival – as a successor of Jürgen Flimm.

Besides artistic companions such as Luc Bondy, also leading politicians were deeply affected by the death of the dynamic woman. Federal Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer stated in a press release: “In her professional career she did not know what failure meant and she refused to accept that something could not be done. With great competence and stamina she achieved everything that seemed important and valuable to

her. Looking at the individual phases of her career, they resemble a chain of lights. It lit up for the last time in Vienna. Her voluntary death leaves a huge gap in the world of theatre and a void among those who knew and appreciated her as a great human being“.

Minister of Culture Claudia Schmied drew attention to Marie Zimmermann’s achievements in contemporary theatre-making: “For all those loving the theatre she was one of the key contacts in this city. Her enthusiasm for art reached even those not actively participating in the art scene. She found the right words for visions, convincing even sceptics that they could become true. And she had the strength to realise these visions. Like everybody knowing and appreciating her, I am deeply moved by the fact that she had no longer the strength to live”.

Vienna’s City Councillor for Cultural Affairs Andreas Mailath-Pokorny described the deceased drama director as “one of the luminous figures of the international theatre world”, who had had a lasting impact on Wiener Festwochen. “The discovery of new things, thorough analysis, pointed social critique were her strengths, which she used with enthusiasm and emotion. Her curiosity infected us and, being Viennese, we were often surprised by her uncompromising attitude. Zimmermann’s death is an enormous loss to the theatre community, we still expected so much of her“.

## Vienna Festival commemorating Marie Zimmermann

At the press conference of the Vienna Festival (“Wiener Festwochen”) on 26 April 2007 Luc Bondy commemorated his deceased drama director and dedicated this year’s festival to her, that offers 41 productions from 20 countries and a total of 202 performances from 11 May to 16 June 2007. “Marie Zimmermann would be furious if we did not celebrate the Festival ecstatically“. Wiener Festwochen are inaugurated with an open-air show at Vienna’s Rathausplatz on 11 May 2007, starring Bobby McFerrin, Joe Zawinul, Hubert von Goisern and Luttenberger\*Klug.

The theatre productions focus on Shakespeare, Luc Bondy produces “King Lear“ with Gert Voss. Peter Zadek shows “Twelfth Night“ at Theater Akzent. The work of Leoš Janáček

The comprehensive festival programme was presented in “News from Austria” No. 24 on 18 December 2006. [www.festwochen.at](http://www.festwochen.at)  
Tel.: 0043/1/589 22 22, A1 Freeline: 0800 664 020.

dominates the music programme. Patrice Chéreau presents “From the House of the Dead“ at Theater an der Wien, Ulrich Rasche stages the “installation” for singers and actors “This is not a Love Song“. 16 women and 24 men explore the phenomenon of romantic love on stage, e.g. in the songs of Schubert and Schumann.

Franz Castorf’s production of Louis-Ferdinand Céline’s novel “North“ (“Nord“) is expected to cause a big stir. In this work published in 1960 the controversial French writer and physician (1894-1961) described the collapse of Nazi Germany as an evil travesty from the perspective of a French collaborator. Céline’s sensational novel “Journey to the End of Night“ (“Voyage au bout de la nuit“) of 1932 is considered one of the most influential works in 20<sup>th</sup>-century literature.

The concert series “Into the City“ offers 27 absolutely breathtaking music performances, e.g. by punk groups from Beijing. The programme at Konzerthaus in Vienna is dominated by classical music of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as well as composers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as Alban Berg, Béla Bartók, Olivier Messiaen – with outstanding orchestras and soloists. ■

Viennafair spotlighting art from Central and South Eastern Europe

The Austrian contemporary art fair Viennafair was held at the trade faire centre “MessezentrumWienNeu“ from 26 to 29 April 2007. The third edition of the fair, in which the international art community has shown great interest, focused on art from Central and South Eastern Europe, with 27 out of 107 exhibiting galleries 27 coming from this region. All important Austrian galleries were represented at Viennafair, that also presented a fine selection of galleries from Western Europe and the USA. Together with his curators, Edelbert Köb, Director of MUMOK (Museum of Modern Art Foundation Ludwig Vienna), picked social-critical Bulgarian video artist Kamen Stoyanov (represented by Galerie Dana Charkasi) in a competition for a solo presentation in the framework of the “MUMOK Factory“. The mix of famous names and young art made Viennafair an exciting experience.

As in the past years, art institutions from Eastern and South Eastern Europe were given the

opportunity to reach a large audience at Viennafair. With the support of the Ministry of Education, Art and Culture, important institutions organised presentations, e.g. The Brno House of Arts, City Gallery Prague, the Institute of Contemporary Art – Sofia, Moderna Galerija Ljubljana, Mücsarnok Budapest, the Museum of Contemporary Art Zagreb and the National Museum of Contemporary Art Bucharest. As in the past two years, the Office of Culture of the City of Vienna supported the programme for collectors. ■

Victor Adler Prize goes to art historian Carl E. Schorske

Art historian Carl E. Schorske born in New York in 1915 was awarded the Victor Adler State Prize in Vienna on 20 April 2007. The 92-year old is considered one of the most important representatives of art history. His main work “Fin-de-Siècle Vienna“ did not only win international acclaim but also the Pulitzer Prize in 1981. Schorske’s academic interest focuses on the European social and cultural history after the 18<sup>th</sup> century. His studies about Austria concentrate on the political and cultural movements in the last decades of the Danube monarchy. ■

New virtual exhibition on Austrian contemporary history

The Austrian Media Library of Vienna’s Technical Museum recently presented a new web exhibition titled “Acoustic Records 1900 to 2000“. The project comprises more than 1500 sound and video documents of the Austrian history. The files can be accessed in a user-friendly way by clicking on a time bar. In the next years the scope of the archives is to be expanded up to the present. Documents of the 19<sup>th</sup> century will be integrated and more in-depth information will be provided on specific themes. The spectrum ranges from the oldest sound document of Emperor Francis Joseph in 1900 and the speech of Joseph Goebbels on the eve of the plebiscite on the annexation of Austria in 1938 to a “Wochenschau“ report on Thomas Bernhard’s theatre play “Heldenplatz“ in 1988 and a recording of Nobel Prize laureate in literature Elfriede Jelinek. ■

[www.viennafair.at](http://www.viennafair.at)

[www.akustische-chronik.at](http://www.akustische-chronik.at)

## Kittsee: Joseph Joachim and the violin in European folk music

To mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of the violin virtuoso, composer and conductor Joseph Joachim (born in Kittsee, Burgenland, in 1831, died in Berlin in 1907), this year's annual exhibition of the Museum of Ethnography at Kittsee Palace is devoted to the violin as an instrument and a cultural phenomenon.

The exhibition "Joseph Joachim and the violin in European folk music" explores the question what the violin of the world famous soloist Joachim and the "anonymous" violin in European folk music have in common. Light is shed on the various facets of the theme: the ordinary and the extraordinary, ethnology and symbolism, craftsmanship and art. Using the great violinist as an example, surprising interrelations between elite culture and popular culture are established. While the instrument has gained great social recognition, the musicians often go unrewarded and are even unpopular. Pictures and old ordinances give us insight into the hard life of "overly sentimental violin players", "tavern fiddlers" and "Gypsy travellers". The exhibition displays rare objects from the Austrian Museum of Ethnology and, of course, various violins as well as the reproduction of a violin workshop to demonstrate the creation of the instrument. ■

## Munch Museum Oslo: first Egon Schiele show in Norway

During his state visit to Norway Federal President Heinz Fischer inaugurated the Egon Schiele exhibition in Oslo on 18 April 2007. This is the first time that Schiele's oeuvre is shown in Scandinavia. In the presence of Norway's King Harald and Queen Sonja, Fischer described the show as a "milestone in the cultural relations" of the two countries and reminded of the fact that in 2003 Queen Sonja had travelled to Vienna to attend the reopening of Albertina with the exhibition "Edvard Munch. Theme and Variation".

At the Museum in Oslo the works of Egon Schiele (1890-1918) and Edvard Munch (1863-1944) are not directly juxtaposed but shown in parallel exhibitions in different rooms. However, curator Mai Britt Guleng selected those works from the Museum's comprehensive permanent

Munch collection that give an impression of the special artistic relationship between the two expressionists. A comparison of nude drawings is, for example, highly interesting.

The selection of works of the two artists – who never met – aims at highlighting their painstaking search and their studies of basic human experiences such as loneliness, pain and fear. 14 paintings and 38 works on paper by Schiele are displayed. The large majority of the masterpieces by Schiele comes from the Leopold Museum in Vienna, which will in turn receive 13 works on loan from Oslo for a large-scale exhibition in autumn 2009.

The Munch Museum also presents catalogues of Munch's exhibitions at Vienna Secession in 1901, 1902 and 1904 as well as the correspondence between President of Secession Alfred Roller and Munch. In one of the letters the Norwegian artist thanked the President of Secession in German for the excellent exhibition concept. The two famous Munch works "The Scream" and "Madonna", whose theft in August 2004 caused a worldwide uproar and that were eventually recovered in 2006, are not shown in the Schiele-Munch exhibition as they are still being restored. ■

## Austrian Ethnographic Museum presents Europe show in Cultural Capital Sibiu

Following an invitation from Romania, the Austrian Ethnographic Museum presents an exhibition on European identities in the new Muzeul de Etnografie Saseasca "Emil Sigerus" in Sibiu, the European Capital of Culture 2007, from 12 May to 20 July 2007. The wide range of exhibits includes the picture of a Latvian oak tree on a banknote, models of hay-drying machines from Slovenia, mittens from Estonia, Easter eggs from the Czech Republic, Tokay wine from Hungary and the Greek and Turkish versions of Cyprus Delights.

On the occasion of the EU enlargement in 2004, the ethnographic institutions of the new EU Member States were requested by the Ethnographic Museum in Vienna to donate an object, which in their own view, symbolises their country and its people. ■

Kittsee Palace (Burgenland): "Saitenblicke – Joseph Joachim und die Geige in der europäischen Volksmusik" ("Joseph Joachim and the violin in European folk music"). 6 May to 11 November 2007. [www.schloss-kittsee.at](http://www.schloss-kittsee.at)

"Egon Schiele", Munch Museum Oslo, ending on 17 June 2007: [www.munch.museum.no](http://www.munch.museum.no)

## End-spurt for Salzburg 2014

A few weeks before selecting the host of the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games 2014, the support of the Austrian population for this large-scale sports event is overwhelming. In a recent Gallup poll, 9 out of 10 Austrians expect positive effects on the City and Land of Salzburg as well as on all of Austria. At the "SportAccord" congress in the Olympic city Beijing attended by the representatives of 100 world sports clubs as well as 50 of the 110 voting members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Salzburg had another opportunity to highlight the advantages of its compact, secure and sustainable concept before a final decision will be taken at the IOC congress in Guatemala on 4 July 2007. The joint presentation by Secretary of State for Sport Reinhold Lopatka, Salzburg's Governor Gabi Burgstaller, Mayor Heinz Schaden, "2014 ambassador" Franz Klammer and Leo Wallner, President of the Austrian Olympic Committee (ÖOC), to sports experts from all over the world and some dozens of IOC members was very successful and met with general approval. ■

## IOC: harsh sanctions to athletes

The decision of the International Olympic Committee to ban six Austrian cross-country skiers and biathletes for life from the Olympics is a very hard verdict. The Austrian federal government reaffirmed that international sports rules and the respective decisions had to be accepted. By ratifying the UNESCO Anti-Doping Convention in the Council of Ministers and submitting the amendment to the Anti-Doping Act to Parliament, the federal government committed itself to "zero tolerance for doping offences". ■

## Stricter licensing procedure in the Federal League

The decision of the Presidents' Conference of the Austrian Federal Football League to adopt stricter rules for licensing football clubs is an important step in the right direction. The unanimously adopted decision provides for clarity, ensures the sound economic development of the clubs and strengthens the responsibility of

autonomous sport. The decision of the Federal League means that a club undergoing bankruptcy proceedings will automatically slip to a lower division at the end of the season. This and similar other measures will take effect when the licences for 2008/09 are granted. ■

## Garry Kasparov advertises for Senior Chess World Championship in Gmunden

Former world champion Garry Kasparov beat the advertising drum in Vienna for the "17<sup>th</sup> Senior Chess World Championship" from 17 to 29 September 2007 in Gmunden (Upper Austria). Kasparov will open the Senior Chess World Championship and compete in a simultaneous tournament. A prominent guest like chess guru Garry Kasparov underlines the significance of this great international sports event, which is expected to attract up to 300 participants, among them leading international chess players. The Austrian Chess Federation (ÖSB) was entrusted with organising the Chess Senior World Championship 2007 by the World Chess Federation (FIDE). FIDE comprises 160 national associations and organises world championships, chess Olympics and many international tournaments. ■

## Lopatka's marathon benefits school project in Guatemala

With 26,279 runners, the 24<sup>th</sup> Vienna City Marathon beat all records. Luke Kibet from Kenya won the marathon with 2:10:07 hours. Luminita Talpos from Romania was the women's winner with 2:32:21. Secretary of State for Sport Reinhold Lopatka covered the 42.195 kilometres for a good cause. Together with the Austrian school in Guatemala and the bishop of Guatemala City, he will support a school project giving indigenous children with a precarious social background a new perspective for the future. ■

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Many Austrians love this intelligent sport. Since 2004 the sports discipline chess has been a regular member of the Federal Sports Organisation, with nine regional associations in the Länder and 20,000 registered active chess players.

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of the company "ELK Haus", the school project in Guatemala will receive 3,000 euros.